

In the Claims

1.-15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended)) [[A]] The plasmid of Claim 21 further comprising a gene encoding *dep*, a 4,5-dihydroxy-2-cyclopenten-1-one (DHCP) efflux protein of SEQ ID No. 3, said plasmid further comprising a disrupted ~~*pur*~~ *purR* gene disrupted by MluI, wherein said plasmid expresses multiple copies of said genes in bacteria cells transformed with said plasmid.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The plasmid of Claim 21 comprising a gene encoding *dep*, a 4,5-dihydroxy-2-cyclopenten-1-one (DHCP) efflux protein of SEQ ID No. 3, said plasmid further comprising a disrupted *ydhB* gene disrupted by NruI or Eco47III, wherein said plasmid expresses multiple copies of said genes in bacteria cells transformed with said plasmid.

19. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The plasmid of Claim 21, wherein the plasmid is comprising a gene encoding *dep*, a 4,5-dihydroxy-2-cyclopenten-1-one (DHCP) efflux protein of SEQ ID No. 3, said plasmid being independent of ~~*pur*~~ *purR*, *ydhC* and *ydhB*, and wherein said plasmid expresses multiple copies of said gene encoding *dep* in bacteria cells transformed with said plasmid.

20. (Currently Amended) A plasmid designated pSP007 having a gene encoding *dep*, a 4,5-dihydroxy-2-cyclopenten-1-one (DHCP) efflux protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No. 3, wherein said plasmid expresses multiple copies of said gene encoding *dep* in bacteria cells transformed with said plasmid.

21. (New) A plasmid comprising a gene encoding *dep*, a 4,5-dihydroxy-2-cyclopenten-1-one (DHCP) efflux protein having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No. 3.
22. (New) The plasmid of claim 21, wherein the plasmid is an expression plasmid.
23. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleic acid sequence that encodes a protein having an amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID No. 3.
24. (New) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of Claim 23 wherein the nucleic acid molecule is derived from *E. coli*.
25. (New) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of Claim 23 wherein the nucleic acid molecule confers resistance to DHCP or a functionally equivalent compound when present in multiple copies in a bacterial cell.
26. (New) A method of identifying a compound that inhibits efflux activity responsible for DHCP resistance comprising:
- transfecting bacteria with a vector comprising a gene encoding the protein of SEQ ID NO: 3;
- and
- testing the transfected bacteria for DHCP resistance in the presence of one or more potential inhibitors to the protein of SEQ ID NO: 3.
27. (New) A method of conferring resistance to DHCP comprising transfecting bacteria with a vector comprising a gene encoding the protein of SEQ ID NO: 3.